

## Literature.

*Aunt Elinor's Lectures on Architecture. Dedicated to the Ladies of England.* London, 1843.

"Fall, if ye must, ye towers and pinnacles,  
With what ye symbolize; authentic story  
Will say, ye disappeared with England's glory."

THINK lines of Wordsworth, beautiful and true as the many in which he has adhered to the world the thoughts which the contemplation of his country had inspired, are the motto of the work before us. They are the key also to the feelings with which the writer has viewed the art of which she treats. But for religion she would never have thought of architecture; and save us the expression of religious feelings, or the satisfaction of religious wants, she does not regard it. The lectures on architecture, therefore, are, in fact, lectures on church building in the Christian, as opposed to the Pagan style of architecture; in this limited sense of the term, a rather comprehensive view is taken, for it is made to include the illuminations of manuscripts, the embroidery of altar cloths and faldstools, and the like. Aunt Elinor knows very little of classic architecture, and is proportionally uncommunicative on the subject; neither is the little that she does say altogether correct. Her object seems to have been to describe the different styles that prevail in our ancient churches, to familiarize the reader with the nomenclature of this branch of architectural science, and to furnish a list of the churches in Sussex and Hants, wherein specimens of the things concerning which she writes may be found. We are thus particular in setting forth the real intention of the writer, because the title of the book is a misnomer; and Aunt Elinor, we are certain, is too conscientious a person to wish that any mistake as to the nature of his bargain should be made by one who purchases her work.

Having thus disposed of the intention of the work, we come to the execution. Setting aside so much of the work as originates in the religious feelings and social notions of the writer, we find little more than a short, commendous, but insufficient explanation of the nomenclature now in use. The different styles of English architecture are described, and the eras of which they were characteristic features are punctually told off, but we doubt very much whether the beginner would derive from this work a clear notion of any thing but dates. This, perhaps, is owing to the extreme paucity of illustrations, and to the fact that the illustrations which are given are not made the subjects of description and comment. Were the illustrations more numerous and apposite, and connected by numbers of reference with the corresponding sentences in the text, the work might possibly be a useful elementary treatise; as it is, we doubt very much whether one who has not read another would be able to distinguish the different styles, of which it professes to detail the principal and essential features.

The writer has been more happy in explaining the terms of art, as the following extract, which may prove instructive to some of our readers, will shew:—

## "LIST OF TECHNICAL TERMS."

"Cathedrals and large churches are usually built in the form of a cross. The eastern part of the cross is the *Choir*. The western part the *Nave*. The part running north and south the *Cross* or *Transept*. The *Lady Chapel* is a space beyond the altar. The *Screen* is a frame-work, generally richly carved, placed at the west end of the choir. The divisions beyond the piers are *Aisles*. The *Choir* is the part immediately in front of the altar, and does not extend beyond the piers, nor include the side aisles leading to the Lady Chapel. *Chapels* are attached to all parts, and are frequent additions. The *Font* is generally placed at the west end, and ought never to be placed far from the entrance to the church, that position being emblematic of Baptism being the door to Christ's Church. In some ancient churches the font is placed outside the door, in a sort of chapel erected over it, called the *Baptistry*. The *Porch* is a small building attached to the door. In large churches the doors are generally at the west end; in small ones often at the north and south sides. *Cloisters* are a covered walk, forming originally the chief means of communication between the various parts of the monastery attached to the church. They generally form a quadrangle, enclosing an open space in the centre. In general one side of the cloisters is joined to the church, the others consist of a series

of open arches, through which the central space is visible. The *Chapter-House* is a room where the ecclesiastics forming what is called the *Chapter* in monastic and cathedral institutions, meet on particular occasions. *Piers* are the walls in the interior between the arches. A *Steeple* is a building above the roof: if it be square-topped it is a *Tower*. A *Lantern* is a short tower of light work. An opening into the tower in the interior above the roof, is also called a lantern. *Turrets* are towers of great height, in proportion to their diameter, often containing staircases. A *Spire* is a tall tower, tapering to a point. *Buttresses* are the projections at the corners of the building, and between the windows. *Set-offs* are the mouldings and slopes which divide them into stages. A *Parapet* is the crowning part of the walls when plain; if indented, it is a *Battlement*. *Macchicolations* are openings in the battlements of castellated work, for the purpose of discharging missiles. *Arches* are either round, pointed, or mixed. A *Semi-circular Arch* has its centre in the same line with its spring. A *Segmental Arch* has its centre lower than the spring. A *Horse-shoe Arch* has its centre above the spring. *Pointed Arches* are either *Equilateral*, or *Drop Arches*, or *Lancet Arches*. An *Equilateral Arch* is described from two centres, the whole breadth of the arch from each other, and form the arch about an equilateral triangle. The *Drop Arch* has a radius shorter than the breadth of the arch, and is described about an obtuse-angled triangle. A *Lancet Arch* has a radius longer than the breadth of the arch, and is described about an acute-angled triangle. All these arches may be of the nature of segmental arches, and have their centres below their springs. *Mixed Arches* are of three centres, which look nearly like elliptical arches; or of four centres, commonly called the *Tudor Arch*; this is flat for its span, and has two of its centres in and near the spring (or point from which the arch springs), and the other two far below it. The *Ogee* or *Contracted Arch* has four centres. *Spandrells* are the spaces included between the arch and the square outside it. *Mullions* are the upright divisions in windows. *Tracery* is the horizontal divisions of windows or panelling. *Tracery* is the ornamental divisions at the heads of windows, &c. When the lines branch out into leaves, arches, &c. the tracery is said to be *flowing*—when the mullions are continued throughout, it is said to be *perpendicular*. *Featherings* are small points ornamenting the parts of tracery. *Cusps* are little arches in the tracery. According to their number they are called *Trefoils*, *Quatrefoils*, *Cinquefoils*. *Double feathering* is when the Cusps are feathered again. *Tablets* are small projecting mouldings or strings, mostly horizontal. *Cornice* is the tablet at the top under the battlement. *Basement* is that at the bottom. *Dripstone* is the tablet that runs round doors and windows. When ornamented it is called a *Canopy*. *Bands* are small strings round shafts, or a horizontal line of square, round, or other panels used to ornament towers, spires, &c. *Niches* are small arches sunk in walls, often ornamented very richly with canopies, and intended to hold images. A *Corbel* is an ornamented projection from the wall to support an arch, beam, niche, or other weight; it is generally a figure or head, an angel holding a shield, &c. *Pinnacle* is a small spire, generally four-sided and ornamented; it is placed on the tops of buttresses, both external and internal. *Crochets* are the small buoches of foliage ornamenting pinnacles and canopies. *Finials* are the larger bunches on the top. *Stalls* are seats for the dean, canons, and other dignitaries, in the choir of collegiate churches. The *Throne* is a rich seat for the bishop.

*Tabernacle work* is the ornamented open work at the top of the stalls, and behind the altar, and any minute fret-work in general. The *Rood-loft* is a screen, with a large projection at the top to hold images, placed between the nave and chancel. *Sedilia* are stone stalls on the south side of the wall, cut out of the wall, designed for the deacons or priests assisting at the Holy Eucharist. They vary in number from one to five, but three is the usual number. The *Piscina* is a stone basin (having a small hole at the bottom to carry off water), where the priest washed his hands before he approached the altar. In some old churches it is a rude niche, in others much ornamented with canopy and pinnacles. The *Credence* or *Credentia* is a ledge (generally within the same niche as the *Piscina*), intended as a place for the elements before their consecration. *Stoups* are small niches with basins, intended for holy water. The *Crypt* is a vaulted chapel under the church."

We should give a very inadequate notion of this book if we were to omit all notice of the religious views which the writer entertains and seeks to inculcate. It is not our province, however, to describe such matter, much less to subject it to comment. To treat the author fairly, therefore, we give an extract, from which the reader will be enabled for himself to

appreciate the quality of that portion of the work which is beyond our jurisdiction.

"In the present day it is very common to hear of ladies uniting to present testimonials of respect to clergymen. We find young people, all zeal and energy, entering into schemes of the kind. I do not mean to speak slightly of this feeling; it is an amiable one, and doubtless every pastor who receives testimonials of the gratitude of his flock, has reason to thank God for having given him the power of gaining their affections. Still I should like to see this done and the other not left undone. And more, I should like to see the first place given to the church. I feel sure that there is hardly a clergyman who would not be more gratified at receiving an altar-cloth, fald-stools, or stained glass, for his church, from the hands of the ladies of his flock, than a piece of plate, a gown, or six dozen cambric handkerchiefs. But I must not forget that many individuals among us have already set us a good example. Her most gracious Majesty the Queen Dowager has presented more than one altar-cloth to the church, and we have heard the names of several ladies who have followed in Queen Adelaide's path. The altar-cloth at ——— cathedral is the work of a young lady.

The altar-cloth of a recently-built church in the parish of ———, near Bristol, was worked by four sisters.

"It may be urged that so costly a gift can be offered by very few. I would suggest that young ladies should unite both their money and their labor, and this plan would have several advantages. The greatest would be the bond of union it would create. Nothing knits hearts closer than a sympathy of feeling and sentiment, brought out into a stronger light by opportunity of acting in concert. And, indeed, in these hard, selfish days we want a bond of union, and we ought to encourage every thing that would tend to make young people more simple in their tastes, more affectionate, less fond of ridiculing want of feeling and lofty aspirations. Many a young woman, whose heart glows with kind feeling, assumes a habit of saying sarcastic things, from a dread of being thought romantic or sentimental. Many a girl is accused of heartlessness and frivolity, because she has been trained from childhood to say she despises poetry and heroics. It is the fashion of the day to bring up girls on the principle of looking after the main chance; and yet the people wonder that they meet with young ladies in society, vulgar-minded, interested, and mercenary, in spite of accomplishment and grace. A dread of making a bad match, or of dying an old maid, is instilled into girls; they look upon the space between their first entering the world and their marriage as a sort of transition state—something too uncertain to be worth thinking of. As long as they do not neglect some of their self-evident duties, as daughters, and sisters, and Christians (for I am not speaking of girls brought up altogether without religion), they are satisfied that nothing more will be required of them, and they never imagine it necessary to think of accounting for time and money wasted on things that bring no real pleasure, and end in weariness of spirit.

"We must all have something to fix our energies and minds upon. Men have public life, professions, business; women till they marry (excepting in particular cases), nothing. Why it is I do not undertake to say; but it is an admitted fact, that there are more single ladies in the world now than there used to be, and yet nobody seems to believe that they are so from their own choice. And, certainly, the education so common now-a-days unfits women for a single life to a remarkable degree. Now if children were brought up to love the church as something real and tangible, to mingle more poetry and sentiment with their religion, to consider this life as a mere passage to another, and to behold in the church the type of the heavenly Jerusalem, their feelings and tastes would insensibly take a loftier tone; they would think more of God, and less of themselves; that flippancy and love of ridicule, which is so common among girls otherwise amiable, would vanish, they would become more humble, and at the same time more dignified; that restless craving for attention, that love of display, which we see carried even into religion, would be lessened, if not destroyed, by a real enthusiasm for art, consecrated to the adornment of the church; in their companions they would see fellow-pilgrims and sisters in Christ, instead of acquaintances to be cherished one day, and cast off for more agreeable friends another. If they married, their path would be self-evident, and their former habits would not interfere with the performance of their new duties; but if, as the chances seem against their forming new ties, they are destined to a single life, then the full value of the tastes and habits they have acquired will shine forth. The church is indeed a home for the lonely; a single life enables persons to devote themselves more entirely to heavenly things, without neglecting every-day duties. Much